

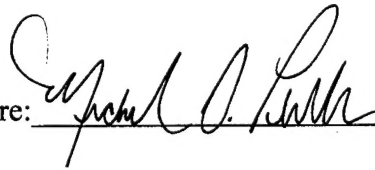
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**WAR TERMINATION: A BRIDGE TOO SHORT**  
**CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE OPERATIONAL COMMANDER**

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A paper submitted to the faculty of the Naval War College on partial satisfaction of the requirements of the Department of Operations

The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Naval War College or the Department of the Navy.

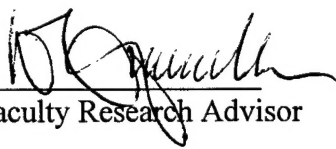
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# WAR TERMINATION: A BRIDGE TOO SHORT

## CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE OPERATIONAL COMMANDER

*“What is essential in war is victory, not prolonged operations”*

*Sun Tzu*

The goal of the operational commander must be to end violent conflict as quickly as possible. Sun Tzu wrote “Victory is the main objective of war. If it is long delayed, weapons are blunted and morale is depressed.”<sup>1</sup> Yet “war termination must consist of more than simply bringing the troops home rapidly.”<sup>2</sup> Liddell Hart adds that “The object in war is a better state of peace even if only from your own point of view...It is essential to conduct war with constant regard to the peace you desire.”<sup>3</sup> Achieving this “better state of peace” focuses the vision upon which “wise war termination strategy”<sup>4</sup> must be based. This strategy seeks to apply all elements of national power--political, economic, military, and psychosocial--toward the ultimate goal of resolving the underlying causes of conflict that ignite war. Failing in that attempt, it seeks, at a minimum, to end hostilities. War is a bloody business that “can cost more in blood and money than any other undertaking in which nations engage.”<sup>5</sup> Nations are well advised to prevent it when possible, prepare for, and fight it effectively when necessary, but most importantly, end it swiftly with an eye to the future to ensure it does not recur. Even the best of strategies and plans, however, will not foresee all the consequences inherent in war. Between the fog and friction of war lie uncertainty and chaos out of which may emerge victory or defeat.

But “wars do not end of themselves; there must be a strategy for making them

end.”<sup>6</sup> History, from the Peloponnesian wars to the “great” and “small” wars of this century, is littered with wars that went on far too long due to the failure of belligerents to recognize this fact and the inherent paradoxical nature of conflict termination.\*

Conversely, the “Gulf War may have ended too soon--before its causes had been fully resolved due to the failure to establish a clear conflict termination policy.”<sup>7</sup> It is critical to recognize the fundamental fact that war results from conflicting interests and ideas, resolution of which is crucial to ending war and seeking peace. Ultimately, conflict termination strategy is outcome based--driven by a clear vision, shaped by the operational commander, of the desired end state. This vision involves seeking and maintaining peace by shifting the paradigm from violent response to competition and conflict toward cooperation and collaboration.

As military professionals we understand the importance of conflict termination as a process to arrive at a better peace. But both civilian and military strategists alike seem to overlook the conflict termination process as a critical and distinct element in the development of the general war plans process. This may be in part because military doctrine pays very little attention to conflict termination and because military forces are trained to win battles--not figure out how to end conflict. In fact, there is currently no military doctrine that specifically outlines the process in terms of operational art.

Without doctrine to address the conflict termination phase of war in detailed fashion the operational commander and policy makers will always fall short in planning a

\*For purposes of clarity the term conflict termination will be used to remain consistent with joint publication terminology. War termination will be used when citing a particular author or idea where appropriate.

complete campaign strategy. Connecting the bridge between military plans and national policy is one of the primary planning elements for the operational commander to struggle with. He must be able to translate the political objectives of a conflict into military conditions to be achieved as the product of a campaign. The intent of this paper is to highlight the war termination responsibilities of the operational commander and to identify the critical gaps in doctrine that hinder conflict termination planning.

### **THE OPERATIONAL CHALLENGE**

A central challenge facing the operational commander and his campaign planners is to clearly define the military conditions in the theater of operations necessary to produce the desired strategic objective. It is the most crucial of all the planning phases. If it is not adequately addressed, the overarching vision of end state is open to failure. The operational commander must set conditions in coordination with the national strategic objectives as defined by the National Command Authorities (NCA), and the operational components (military force) executing the means to accomplish the desired end state. It is important for the operational commander to connect what is politically acceptable and militarily possible. Thus, following the Clausewitzian dictum that the last step must be considered before the first step, makes clear the importance of what it is one wants to achieve before waging war<sup>8</sup>. Conflict termination requires continual reassessment and continuous discussion and decision between the high priests in the political environment and the military strategists with the operational commander. It is the responsibility of the operational commander to translate the political objectives into operational design to impose one's will upon the opponent and bring about conflict termination. The

operational commander must be able to synthesize the desires of the national political leaders and effectively integrate national strategy with military means. Critical to the campaign planner's efforts is the ability to identify clearly delineated and distinctive phases in the conflict termination plan. Consideration of the key phases in the operational design should be planned, synchronized, and evaluated according to contributions made or effect upon the clearly defined end state to be achieved. However, end states do not just simply occur. It is incumbent upon the policy maker to articulate the end state as precisely as possible so the operational commander can translate it into his military objectives and weave through all of the factors that will potentially influence the outcome.

#### **OPERATIONAL FACTORS AFFECTING WAR TERMINATION PLANS**

Michael Rampy states that once military forces engage in conflict, the political leaders must provide direction for the operational design without interfering with the operational commanders and the military operations in general. The assumption made by Rampy is that our military commanders completely understand the factors that directly influence the method of conflict termination.

The nature of the environment has several direct influencing factors that must be considered by military and political strategists alike. They include:

1. Domestic politics
2. Third party involvement
3. Information technologies
4. Coalitions
5. Conflict objectives

Domestic politics include public support for the objectives being sought and how those politics affect the conflict objectives and public opinion. During the Vietnam conflict there was a major disconnect between political and military objectives that poisoned the internal politics at home, and subsequently came to divide the nation and affected how the nation prosecuted the war<sup>9</sup>. Michael Handel wrote:

Most of the historical accounts of the process of war termination refer in great detail to the inner struggles between those who want to continue the war and those who advocate its conclusion. Among the forces that participate in this process, we can cite the government and its leaders, the opposition parties, the military elite and the rank-and-file armed forces, and public opinion.<sup>10</sup>

Domestic influences will be significant as nations face decreasing budgets and vanishing resources. These factors coupled with the public perception that large scale conventional wars are a thing of the past may contribute to an increasing tendency to use military forces for nontraditional missions. Military leaders and campaign planners have a difficult task ahead as the military moves away from traditional roles. More than ever Commanders must recognize the criticality behind establishing well defined goals and objectives and figuring out how to translate goals and objectives into pre-planned exit strategies or a clearly identifiable conflict termination. Failure to adequately develop conflict termination or exit strategies could lead to increased casualties, loss of troop morale, and reduced confidence in political and military leadership. Political and military leadership will be challenged to skillfully arrive at war termination strategy in the context of being a member of a large coalition where our foxhole partners may have different perceptions of what the end state should look like.

A second factor is the degree of third party involvement such as the influence of international organizations like the United Nations. Unlike in the past, very little today goes unnoticed on the world stage. Today, it is difficult for aggressive states to prepare their forces for hostilities before multinational opposition could be formed and respond<sup>11</sup> because of information technologies. World opinion weighs significantly more than it once did because it is difficult to hide the ills of regional Saddams and Qaddafis or other rogue leaders.

A third factor is information technologies. This factor alone is probably the most powerful one directly affecting both the operational commander and the policy maker. Access to information is making the world smaller, creating and reshaping the political world and creating the emergence of more political actors. Access to knowledge has created an environment where virtually everyone in the world is a consumer of information and are therefore less constrained by world opinion.<sup>12</sup> Most conflicts gain global interest when the media take them into households all over the globe in real time, and the economic interdependence of nations draws more actors into the picture.<sup>13</sup> The information age has created a global interconnectedness that leaves no one untouched by or blind to abnormal international behavior. In a sense the information age has done much to level the playing field of body politics. Instant worldwide information is essentially what landed American forces in Somalia and Rwanda. The media played the plight of the people of Rwanda and in Somalia over and over until it received international attention and forced a solution largely answered by military forces. Because of this the policy maker and the operational commander will have to balance the people's desire to help



with their wish to ensure conflict resolution is swift, and done with minimal collateral damage. Because of the information age and its associated technologies virtually no nation is an island unto itself. Borders for the most part have been transcended.<sup>14</sup>

A fourth factor of the environment is whether the war is fought unilaterally or by a coalition. This factor has tremendous leverage on conflict termination. Although we did conduct a unilateral action in Panama, it is unlikely United States will often go it alone in any future conflict. The interconnectedness of global interdependency makes it virtually impossible for any nation-state to enter conflict without affecting the interest of non-belligerents.<sup>15</sup> Coalitions are particularly problematic for the operational commander because the vision of end state may not be parallel to that of his allies. The factors the policy maker uses to arrive at his vision of end state may discount the importance of religious or ethnic and cultural traditions in the region in which the operational commander is to manage violence or peace. Failure to consider the cultures of coalition partners could serve to splinter multinational forces and potentially sever political and military objectives. Military Operations Other Than War (MOOTW) greatly complicate matters concerning end states and post-hostilities operations because US forces have not received sufficient training to deal with the unique problems concerning civil affairs requirements typically associated in such operations. Thus, the operational commander has to think beyond the traditional American way of war and concern himself with language barriers, cultural differences, equipment interoperability problems, as well as command and control in the context of interagency participation.

The fifth and final factor is conflict objectives. This factor is important because it will affect how states terminate the conflict. Without a vision of the what the desired end state is to look like (politically, socially, militarily, and security-wise) the entire conflict termination process fails. Getting this phase correct is essential because end state should shape military objectives and set the direction for conflict termination, thus connecting the bridge between policy makers and the military component. The operational commander must also be prepared for the end state to become an evolutionary vision where it may change over the course of a particular operation. This is particularly problematic in MOOTW's. For example, the end state in Somalia changed several times, which in turn changed the operational commander's military objectives. The notion of mission creep<sup>16</sup> tends to prevail when end states change. When this happens, the risk of alienating domestic support and maintaining international legitimacy becomes a major concern.

These factors are but a few to be considered by the operational commander and the policy maker as they attempt to design a campaign plan with an appropriate conflict termination strategy. The success of conflict termination plans is the linkage to the national strategic objectives. This linkage in itself can be the measure of success or failure among policy makers, military leaders, and the interagency actors--conflict termination strategies cannot be made independently of these bodies--all have essential roles to play in matching means and ends.

## THE PARADOXICAL NATURE OF WAR TERMINATION

*"The paradox of peace is that it must be defended"*

Although more difficult to recognize and understand, the operational commander must give special attention to the complexities associated with the paradoxical nature of war termination.

The best test of a successful conflict termination plan is whether or not the defeated opponent embraces the outcome.<sup>17</sup> Determining what is necessary for the opponent to embrace is an extremely difficult process and one to which the operational commander must apply operational art and operational genius. This critical stage of negotiations is where military strategists have the problem of the paradoxical nature of war termination.<sup>18</sup> Coming to grips with war termination is perhaps the most complicated challenge of conflict. When one side appears to be ready to negotiate or sue for peace the other side may perceive this as a sign of weakness. On the other hand, if the other side is losing and is weak, it may not want to negotiate because of the likeliness of getting an unfair settlement at the negotiation table. Conversely, if one side is eager to negotiate because it is simply tired of the conflict and wants to quit the war, the opponent may sense this and, therefore, have little incentive to negotiate. It is important for the commander to recognize and seize negotiation opportunities, while at the same time ensuring the linkage to the national security objectives.<sup>19</sup> If he fails, then a situation of prolonged conflict is likely to occur and the result may be something like a Vietnam. In both Korea and Vietnam the United States was eager to negotiate because the costs (casualties) were exceeding the benefits. As a result of eagerness, we fell prey to the

enemy. If one side is much more eager to negotiate terms, he is likely to get less of a bargain. On the other hand, if one pretends to be tough and could go on fighting forever in an attempt to send the enemy a message that he is in fact strong, he is likely to end up prolonging the war.

The paradox is that one may be doing the right thing for bargaining, but it may become a self-fulfilling prophecy; i.e., the more one wants peace, the more one will want to pretend to be strong and appear to be able to go on fighting forever--and as a result does. If one wants to terminate a war, one may have to pretend one could go on fighting indefinitely. For the operational commander this can be particularly problematic if both sides pretend they can go on fighting indefinitely; at the bargaining table each one of them believes he has a better leverage on the other.<sup>20</sup> This paradox arose in WWI and in Korea; both prestige and the passion of the people were on the line and both players appeared to be tough and thought they could win. Both would have liked to quit the war; but because of the bargaining positions they took the war ends up being prolonged rather than shortened. When an opportunity to end the war is at hand, the tempo of warfare is invariably increased as the two warring factions jockey for positions by taking risky last minute territorial gains in an effort to give themselves better bargaining positions. The result, of course, could be a collapse of the whole process. The dramatic increase in the tempo of combat was reflected in the Korean conflict by the enormous increase in artillery rounds and a dramatic increase in casualties towards the end of the war. This increase in combat activity suggested our effort to show the North Koreans and the

Chinese just how serious we were in the last days of the conflict. The Chinese showed a similar trend towards the end of the war.

The problem facing nations and their respective strategists is that they are reluctant to negotiate when they are either too strong or too weak. If they are strong, why should they negotiate--they are winning--and maybe the big decisive victory is just around the corner. If they are too weak, why should they negotiate--their bargaining position is weak and therefore they may not get a fair settlement.<sup>21</sup>

The paradoxical nature of war termination highlights the problems confronting military leaders as well as policy makers. War is the easy part. Conflict termination is the most difficult to achieve. And it becomes even more difficult as US forces take on more nontraditional roles. It is difficult for both sides to find the right equilibrium where both sides feel roughly equal and can therefore lay down their weapons and come to terms. However, in Desert Storm, the story was different in the sense that the US was not very effective in determining exactly how it wanted the end state to look and, therefore, how it measured success in terms of destroying the Iraqi war machine.<sup>22</sup> One could argue that our conflict termination strategy in the Gulf War failed us because Saddam Hussein is still in power with a very viable regional military threat. And he still retains the potential to develop and unleash weapons of mass destruction. Waiting too long to end a conflict is just as dangerous and destructive as ending it too early--maybe the "100 hour ground war" lost sight of our national objective and as a result sacrificed *military security* for *military victory*. Six years later the US-led coalition is still active in the theater of operations conducting no-fly zone operations with thousands of US troops deployed.

## THE PROBLEM OF DOCTRINE AND LACK OF GUIDANCE

*Conflict termination should be considered from the outset of planning and should be refined as the conflict moves toward advantageous termination.*

*Doctrine for Joint Operations (Joint Pub 3-0)*

Americans like to think that conflict termination takes care of itself. Just as we believed in past wars, the Gulf War was no different. Our primary war time objective is to defeat the enemy and provide the conditions necessary for a better peace. This is the American view of war--quick, clean, and with minimal casualties.<sup>23</sup> The American view also assumes victory in all cases--doctrine makes no provision for any outcome but victory. Unfortunately, the reality is that war termination will *not* take care of itself and it is more than simply concluding hostilities. *How* the conflict is terminated, *when* the conflict is terminated, *why* the conflict is terminated are important questions with respect to the attainment of political objectives and the kind of peace achieved. The manner in which military campaigns are planned and fought bears crucially on how, why, and when wars are terminated. Conflict termination strategies, to be effective, must work at the interface between political objectives and the military strategy designed to achieve those objectives. This interface is the most critical linkage with which the military leader and the policy makers must come to terms. It is this juncture where operational art meets with political constraint.<sup>24</sup> Connecting this bridge between operational art and political constraint is perhaps why one searches for official US military planning doctrine seeking clear guidance and direction on how to think about, plan, and implement an effective conflict termination strategy.<sup>25</sup>

Military strategy properly concerns itself with maintaining the advantage aimed at winning the conflict.<sup>26</sup> It is focused on applying military means to attain political ends. As these go beyond the mere destruction of the enemy, it is equally appropriate that our operational doctrine address matters of conflict termination in a more concrete, step-by-step fashion. Doctrine should make clear to the campaign planner that political interaction is critical and does not cease with the onset of war. And diplomacy should continue to occur as an inherent aspect of war, extending even beyond the cessation of hostilities.<sup>27</sup> Paul Pillar supports this notion as revealed in his conflict termination study that, historically, fully two-thirds of interstate conflicts have ended as a result of negotiations either before or after an armistice.<sup>28</sup> Based on the results of Pillar's study, it may be possible to identify some broadstroke generalities the operational commander can include in his conflict termination strategy and ultimately leading towards successful outcomes. They include:

- (a) Pre-conflict planning for war termination<sup>29</sup>
- (b) Identify a distinct war termination phase in the campaign planning process<sup>30</sup>
- (c) Sustaining dialogue with the adversary even while engaged in combat operations<sup>31</sup>
- (d) Employing operational pauses, branches, or sequels, in fighting as opportunities for intensified diplomatic measures<sup>32</sup>
- (e) Demonstrating good faith, even through unilateral gestures, as part of the implicit or explicit bargaining that leads to conflict termination<sup>33</sup>

While the above list only attempts to recognize a few of the operational considerations for conflict termination it may do little to clear up the "fog" because of the lack of specific guidance and doctrine for conflict termination at the operational level. To

the extent current policy or doctrinal publications address conflict termination at all, they offer little to the operational planner that is of any greater use than the basic strategic and operational suggestions mentioned above.

In fact, Joint Pub 1's conceptual division of the joint warfare campaign planning process into four distinct parts (the operational concept, the logistic concept, the deployment concept, and the organizational concept) is perhaps most striking not for what it says, but for what it omits; i.e., any explicit reference to conflict termination.

One finds a similar problem upon a review of individual service doctrine. At the Naval War College for example, students are encouraged to frame operational art into the Four Questions, derived from current Joint Doctrine, to assist them in developing all encompassing campaign plans. The first question is immediately deficient: "What military conditions must be produced in the theater of war or operations to achieve the strategic goal?"<sup>34</sup> That fundamental question cannot be fully answered without addressing equally crucial considerations related to conflict termination. All of the service doctrines stop short in at least two respects: First, no clear guidance is available on exactly how to wed military conditions to strategic aims; and secondly, they fail to effectively address the question of how those military conditions serve the transition from war to peace, a fundamental requirement for successful war termination.<sup>35</sup> If our operational planning is to serve the requirements levied by our national military strategy, this doctrinal gap cannot be dismissed as something that will somehow take care of itself. Conflict termination strategies require constant fine tuning and reassessment by the operational commander and our policy makers. While doctrinal development is important, it is only



one part of the solution. The real challenge facing the military leader cannot be met by doctrine alone. The war fighter who does not consult with the political thinkers or include interagency contributions is subject to a less favorable situation during the development of conflict termination plans.

## **WHY THE OPERATIONAL COMMANDER SHOULD PLAN FOR WAR**

### **TERMINATION**

***“To bring a war or one of its campaigns to a successful close requires a thorough grasp of national policy. On that level, strategy and policy coalesce: the commander is simultaneously a statesmen.”***

In the ideal American approach to strategy, conflict termination planning is minimal--something that can be managed almost at the last minute once victory is in clear view. If, as assumed in US war planning doctrine,<sup>36</sup> the outcome of a war is expected to be the opponent's decisive military defeat, the operational commander's main conflict termination considerations are how to accomplish that defeat and--secondarily--how to deal with the defeated enemy following his surrender. Clearly, this problem involves more combat planning than conflict termination planning. Joint doctrine even suggests that conflict termination criteria cannot be formulated until US forces prevail: “To facilitate conception of effective termination criteria, US forces must be dominant in the final stages of an armed conflict by achieving the leverage sufficient to impose a lasting solution.”<sup>37</sup>

Nevertheless, even in such favorable circumstances, some military means may prove more likely than others to be effective in producing a better peace.<sup>38</sup> This is best illustrated by a negative example and is lined up with the paradoxical nature of war

termination discussed earlier: brutal and repressive measures involving substantial collateral damage to civilians and civilian property, cause deeply rooted resentments and hatred that serve only to create Part Two of the next conflict. Bosnia is a perfect example of deeply rooted hatreds that existed, but were largely contained during Tito's reign, and subsequently went unchecked after his death.

When the situation is less than ideal and the operational commander is constrained by politics or his own plan, conflict termination becomes a very complex matter. Political constraints created an awkward and difficult situation in Vietnam which dictated the use of force be limited so as not to escalate the conflict. If force is rendered ineffective in terms of decisively defeating the enemy, relating means to ends and ends to means becomes much more complex and problematic. Thus, conflict termination will not just simply "take care of itself."

Future conflict is more likely to be of a limited nature and will not reflect the traditional notions of total war such as the world wars. It seems likely military forces may be used more and more outside their "traditional" military roles. The recent past suggest that future conflict will be characterized by constraints on one or both belligerents, and that such wars will be terminated prior to a decisive defeat--our traditional method of securing victory--and terminated more likely by negotiated agreement during the actual phase of combat.<sup>39</sup>

Some academics<sup>40</sup> may argue that the task of addressing war termination is not the role of the operational commander. In today's global environment the military is being directed to act in operations other than war. If the military is going to continue to be

tasked to manage the Rwandas, the Haitis, the Somalias, and the drug Mafia's of the world, one could argue that war termination strategies are inappropriate for such operations and therefore the military should not be included in the planning stages. It is not self evident that the business of ending a war is one which properly admits the military commander. Paralleling a Western tendency to see a clear division between war and peace, many observers tend to see an equally sharp dividing line between political and purely military activities. Perhaps, then, war termination is best left to the political leadership under such situations. Maybe the political objectives for future conflict could be articulated so that all the military planner has to do is construct his military plans and military objectives to serve those needs.<sup>41</sup> We only wish such simplicity would absolve us from such complexities.

There really is no choice for the operational commander when it comes to conflict termination strategies. Conflict termination must be included in the military planning process not only because military actions, the means, contribute to and shape war termination, but also because experience reveals it is not done elsewhere. Thus, the operational commander does have a critical role in determining conflict termination plans and his role is even more important (particularly if the Department of Defense becomes the lead agency) as operations other than war increase. And, perhaps even more importantly, military strategies cannot be designed without including the political objectives--and political objectives for war cannot be formulated without military resources, their inherent and specialized capabilities--they go hand in glove--planning in a vacuum by either the military component or the political component leads to major

disconnects in the planning phases.<sup>42</sup> Interestingly, the current military planning doctrine sets this very failure up. Planning doctrine describes political objectives as independently fixed and given--and for the foreseeable future it is not likely such doctrine will be established for political objectives.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION**

Conflict termination involves more than simply ending hostilities. It is a matter of effective coordination in the development of objectives and strategies, while at the same time linking the political leadership and the military commander to achieve the ends with the appropriate means. The American approach to military strategy has had a tendency to sever the links between military action and the setting of political objectives. American military strategy has largely been awkward in its contribution towards achieving a lasting peace because the military leadership and political leadership failed to fully understand the paradoxical nature of conflict termination. This is in part due to having insufficient doctrinal guidance to achieve the ends as described by the policy maker. It is also because current doctrine and policy do not cause us to think through the implications of successfully achieving our objectives. The transition from battlefield success to a post-hostilities phase is probably the most critical phase of general war. The operational commander must be skillful in contributing to the balance of military force and diplomatic efforts to preserve and reinforce our political objectives while, at the same time working the concerns of a defeated enemy to prohibit Part Two of the same conflict. The latter issue must be managed in cooperation with the military by non-governmental agencies and other relief or humanitarian agencies. In terms of the interagency

contribution it is essential that any doctrinal development concerning conflict termination include input and dialogue from the interagency organizations. Achieving such cooperation can only enhance conflict termination strategy and create a more favorable situation for the war fighter and the policy maker as they attempt to develop attainable end states and military objectives.

It is important for military officers to recognize that the outcome of war is of primary importance and not simply the outcome of a particular campaign.<sup>43</sup> The means with which the end is achieved must be in synchronization with the national objectives. The outcome of war determines how well the campaign(s) serve the nation's interest. As members of the armed forces it is our challenge to translate the initial political and military objectives into a conflict termination condition that directly bridges national and military objectives that will shape the desired end state. As James Reed tells us "The process of conflict termination should be viewed, then, as the bridge over which armed conflict transitions into more peaceful forms of interaction."<sup>44</sup> As currently written our joint operational doctrine demands consideration of conflict termination during the planning process and provides some basis for thinking through the war termination requirements.<sup>45</sup> However, it falls short in a couple of ways. First, while it calls attention to conflict termination, the planning guidance is insufficient to derive any practical steps of how to proceed if a decisive defeat of the enemy is not the primary war aim. Secondly, it assumes political objectives are already firmly established and unable to be influenced by military planning. These shortcomings could be remedied by establishing doctrine that

calls for examination of the internal requirements for establishing and evolving conflict termination objectives and techniques.

Doctrine should require that the Commander's Estimate and military operational plans address conflict termination considerations in detail, both to guide wartime strategy and to serve as a basis for dialogue between military planners, policy makers, and the interagency components. It should also require incorporation and coordination of diplomatic measures. Finally, it should make arrangements, for the formation early in the planning process, of a dialogue mechanism between policy makers and military planners aimed at the merger of political objectives and military strategies for conflict termination. This critical gap must be bridged to adequately address conflict termination strategies. Until doctrine addresses the practical steps to achieve this end, we will continue to struggle with conflict termination.

Future combat operations will feature limits on both ends and means. A key challenge will be to get the dialogue right between the political leadership and the military leadership while at the same time weaving the contributions of the interagencies throughout the planning process. Only if these elements are synchronized can a productive planning process begin.

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## ENDNOTES

- <sup>1</sup> Sun Tzu, *The Art of War*, Samuel B. Griffith, Oxford University Press, 1963, pp. 73 and 76.
- <sup>2</sup> "The Gulf War Military Lessons Learned," *Interim Report of the CSIS Study Group on Lessons Learned from the Gulf War*, NDU Press, 1991, p. 48.
- <sup>3</sup> B.H. Liddell Hart, *Strategy*, Faber and Faber, 1954, 1967; Meridian Printing, 1991, p. 353.
- <sup>4</sup> "The Gulf War Military Lessons Learned," pp. 48-49.
- <sup>5</sup> Fred C. Ickle, *Every War Must End*, Columbia University Press, 1971, p. 1.
- <sup>6</sup> Michael Handel, Naval War College lecture, 16 October 1995.
- <sup>7</sup> "The Gulf War Military Lessons Learned," p. 48.
- <sup>8</sup> See Carl Von Clausewitz, *On War*, edited and translated by Michael Howard and Peter Paret (Princeton: Princeton University Press 1976), p. 579.
- <sup>9</sup> Lieutenant Colonel Mario A Garza, USAF, "*Conflict Termination: Every War Must End*" Published in *Challenge and Response—Anticipating US Military Security Concerns* by Dr. Karl P. Magyar, Air University Press, Maxwell AFB, August 1994. LTC Garza explains war termination as being influenced by social factors and social change.
- <sup>10</sup> Michael Handel, "War Termination--A Critical Survey" in *Termination of Wars: Processes, Procedures, and Aftermath's*, edited by Nissan Oren (Jerusalem: Hebrew University Press, 1982), p. 75.
- <sup>11</sup> Lieutenant Colonel Mario Garza, USAF "*Conflict Termination: Every War Must End*", Air University Press, August 1994.
- <sup>12</sup> Lt Gen Ervin J. Rokke, USAF, President, National Defense University, phone interview, 5 January 1997
- <sup>13</sup> "*Balancing The Trinity: The Fine Art of Conflict Termination*", Susan E. Stredansky, Major, USAF. Paper submitted to School of Advanced Airpower Studies, Air University Press, Maxwell AFB, AL. February 1996.
- <sup>14</sup> Lt Gen Ervin J. Rokke, USAF, President National Defense University, phone interview, 5 January 1997.
- <sup>15</sup> Lieutenant Colonel Mario Garza, USAF, "*Conflict Termination: Every War Must End*", Air University Press, August 1994.
- <sup>16</sup> Mission creep in Somalia was illustrated best by the shift towards expanding a secure environment to include the whole country as a result of UN Security Council Resolution 814. The implications of the resolution were that Somalia would be restored to a viable country, ready to take over its own destiny--in other words, nation building which means prolonged operations.
- <sup>17</sup> Michael Handel, Naval War College lecture 16 October 1995

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid. Lecture

<sup>19</sup> Ibid. Lecture

<sup>20</sup> Ibid. Lecture

<sup>21</sup> Ibid. Lecture

<sup>22</sup> Michael R. Gordon and General Bernard E. Trainer. The Generals War: The Inside Story of the Conflict in the Gulf. Little, Brown and Company, Boston, 1994. p 469. Trainer explains that the Powell doctrine contributed to the decision to bring the war to a premature close and muddled the ending and left Washington without a means for influencing events in postwar Iraq. This problem highlights the "all or nothing" Powell strategy.

<sup>23</sup> Russell Weigley, The American Way of War: A History of United States Military Strategy and Policy. Weigley explains the style of traditional American warfare is attrition warfare where decisive defeat of the enemy and immediate return to the homeland is the preferred style.

<sup>24</sup> Joint Pub 3-0. Joint doctrine explains: "Since the nature of the termination will shape the futures of the contesting nations, it is fundamentally important to understand that conflict termination is an essential link between national security, security strategy, national military strategy, and post-hostility aims--the desired outcome." (Joint Pub 3-0, p. I-12).

<sup>25</sup> Joint doctrine (Joint Pub 3-0) provides broad guidance on the need to consider conflict termination in planning, but it stops short of offering any specific elements of the planning process and is unclear as to where the responsibility lies for setting termination objectives or criteria.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> Lieutenant Colonel James W. Reed, Parameters, "*Should Deterrence Fail: War Termination in Campaign Planning*," VOL.XXIII NO.2, Summer 1993.

<sup>28</sup> Paul R. Pillar, *Negotiating Peace: War Termination as a Bargaining Process* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton Univ. Press, 1983), p. 25. Pillar's observation is drawn from a survey of 142 conflicts over the period 1800-1980. His analysis suggests that 68 percent of interstate conflicts, and 48 percent of all categories of conflict, have ended through some process involving negotiation between belligerent parties.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid. p.25

<sup>30</sup> Ibid. p.25

<sup>31</sup> Ibid. p.25

<sup>32</sup> Ibid. p.25

<sup>33</sup> Ibid. p.25

<sup>34</sup> Naval War College, 1996 Joint Military Operations (JMO) curriculum guidance.

<sup>35</sup> LTC James Reed, p. 44

<sup>36</sup> No one in their right mind wearing a US military uniform would ever expect doctrine to anticipate defeat, and it only makes sense to plan for victory. Nevertheless, review of Joint Pub 3-0 gives the distinct



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impression that only one outcome is possible. Little is written in US doctrine about what to do if plans go awry, and almost nothing is said about linking military actions to diplomatic actions.

<sup>37</sup> Joint Pub 3-0, p. I-11.

<sup>38</sup> B.H. Liddell Hart made a strong point of this issue in his book *Strategy* (New York: Meridian, 1991). Joint Doctrine also makes this point: "National military strategy attempts to promote peace, deter aggression, and failing that, fight and win. But in the larger context, defeating the enemy military force is rarely sufficient, in and of itself, to ensure a long term solution to a crisis. Properly conceived conflict termination criteria are key to ensuring that victories achieved with military force endures." (Joint Pub 3-0, p. I-11).

<sup>39</sup> Pillar, pp. 26-30. Pillar argues that the scarcity of capitulation's in interstate wars of recent times has declined substantially. He further argues that modern conflict has lost its uni-dimensional notion of what determines winning and losing a conflict. War, according to Pillar, has lost much of its traditional duel-like quality that Clausewitz describes and has gravitated more towards a cost-benefit analysis.

<sup>40</sup> Jane Holl, executive director of Carnegie's Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict argues that exit strategies are dysfunctional and are not at all helpful to the military commander. She says the commander should focus of winning the conflict and as such, any planning for conflict termination or exit strategy diverts his attention and his resources to activities that are not associated with his primary military objective.

<sup>41</sup> Joint Pub 3-0 suggests: "Knowing when to terminate military operations and how to preserve achieved advantages as a component of strategy and operational art. Before forces are committed, Joint Force Commanders must know how the National Command Authorities intend to terminate the operation and ensure its outcomes endure, and then determine how to implement that strategies design at the operational level."

<sup>42</sup> Clausewitz noted the importance of both military and political collusion: If war is to be fully consonant with the political objectives, and policy suited to the means available for war, then unless the statesmen and the soldier are combined in one person, the only sound expedient is to make the commander-in-chief a member of the cabinet, so that the cabinet can share in the major aspects of the activities." Clausewitz, p. 8.

<sup>43</sup> Michael I. Handel. Lecture, Naval War College, 16 October 1995

<sup>44</sup> Lieutenant Colonel James W. Reed, USA, "*Should Deterrence Fail: War Termination in Campaign Planning*", *Parameters* Vol. XXIII NO.2, Summer 1993

<sup>45</sup> Joint Pub 3-0.

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